

*Asks MMS to Clarify New Requirements so New Permits Can be Issued*  
June 11, 2010

WASHINGTON, DC — Today, U.S. Congressman Charlie Melancon (LA-03) sent a letter to the Administration as part of his continuing efforts to end the de facto shallow water drilling moratorium caused by unclear new federal regulations. Congressman Melancon joined the entire Louisiana House delegation in sending a letter to the head of Minerals Management Service with a list of clarifications required for shallow water drilling operations in the Gulf to resume again.

In the letter, the delegation said, “[W]e strongly urge that you work closely with shallow water drilling interests in the Gulf of Mexico to ensure that shallow water drilling operations may recommence immediately.”

The letter concluded, “We attached for your review a list of...clarifications required by the shallow water drilling industry in order to provide the certainty required to recommence drilling operations. Your agency must immediately resolve these and other uncertainties and immediately begin the appropriate issuance of new shallow water drilling permits.”

While the Administration has stated that the moratorium on shallow water drilling in the Gulf of Mexico has been lifted, many companies feel a “de facto” moratorium remains because of the lack of detail and clarity surrounding new safety requirements. The federal government has announced there will be a number of additional inspections and certifications for operations in the Gulf, but has not clarified how these measures will be implemented and applied.

[Click here](#) to read the letter Congressman Melancon and the Louisiana delegation sent today.

Congressman Melancon has been pressing the Administration to clear up these details so the offshore energy industry – and the Louisiana-based service companies and thousands of jobs that rely on drilling – can continue to thrive. On Tuesday, Congressman Melancon [led a delegation letter](#)

requesting a meeting with the Secretary of the Interior to discuss how ways to end the current six-month moratorium on deepwater drilling as quickly as possible, while addressing the safety issues exposed by the Deepwater Horizon oil disaster. In his

[meeting with President Obama last week](#)

, Congressman Melancon asked him directly to speed up the federal review of offshore rigs so the moratorium could end before it further harmed Louisiana’s economy.

Congressman Melancon has been leading efforts in Louisiana to coordinate the private, federal, state, and local response to the oil leak caused by the explosion on the Deepwater Horizon oil platform on April 20th. He represents in Congress the areas of coastal Louisiana most directly affected by the oil leak, including Plaquemines, St. Bernard, Terrebonne, Lafourche and southern Jefferson Parishes. The Deepwater Horizon platform was located 50 miles off the coast of Louisiana’s Third Congressional District.

Congressman Melancon has also been an advocate for Louisiana's fishermen and seafood industry impacted by the oil spill in the Gulf. Congressman Melancon secured a fisheries disaster declaration from the federal government less than a month after [his first request](#) , paving the way for financial assistance for Louisiana fishermen and small business owners.

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